fully to comprehend, it is rather owing to the imperfection of science, than to the irregularity of nature.

A few illustrations of this point, taken from general facts already ascertained, will place the subject in a clearer light.

The chemical substances, known by the names of *Gum Mucus* and *Fœcula*, are constantly emollient, demulcent, and nutritious. They manifest these qualities even when extracted from acrid and poisonous vegetables, as in Arum, Calla, and Jatropha.

Sugar is nutritious and demulcent. When subjected to a spontaneous chemical change by the vinous fermentation, it is universally a strong diffusible stimulus.

Fixed oils are emollient and laxative. Also nutritious.

Volatile oils on the contrary are acrid, stimulating, heating, and antispasmodic.

Tannin and the *Gallic* acid are uniformly antiseptic and powerfully astringent.

The *Acetous*, *Citric*, *Tartaric* and similar vegetable *acids* are refrigerant and antiseptic.

Bitter *Extractive* substances are usually tonic.

Resins, which are bitter and acrid, are commonly cathartic.

Emetine, as separated by Pelletier and Magendie, is powerfully emetic.

Morphium, obtained by Serturner, is a very strong narcotic.

The foregoing are some of the examples, which the present state of Chemistry allows us to observe of affinity between chemical and medicinal characters. With a few exceptions they will be found to be strictly true. Yet the analysis of vegetables is at present but imperfectly known, and an extended investigation is continually bringing new principles to light. We can hardly expect that the business of generalization should be attempted with complete success, until the constituent facts are better understood. From what we already know, however, it is not chimerical to predict, that if the chemistry of vegetables were as perfectly known in all its parts, as in those which we have detailed; their medicinal properties might be inferred, with at least as great certainty, as that which now attends most inferences in the conjectural science of medicine.

In regard to the botanical affinities of plants, as affording evidence of their medicinal powers, much has been said and written. Petiver, Hoffman, Linnæus, Hasselquist, and recently the learned Professor Decandolle have bestowed much

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